

Stroke Awareness



Every 40 seconds, someone in the United States has a stroke. Stroke can be deadly; however, it is preventable and if caught and treated early, the damage of stroke can be avoided.

During a stroke, part of your brain dies because the blood supply is cut off when an artery in the brain is either blocked (ischemic stroke) or starts bleeding (hemorrhagic stroke). The side effects of stroke can include disability and death. Your recovery from stroke depends on which part of your brain is affected and how quickly you receive treatment. The faster you receive treatment, the faster and more complete recovery you will have.

REDUCING YOUR RISK OF STROKE

Knowing your risk factors and taking preventative steps can help reduce your chances of having a stroke. Some risk factors cannot be controlled, such as your age, ethnicity, gender and family history. There are, however, some factors and health conditions you can control or manage to reduce your risk of stroke including:

- Alcohol use
- Diabetes
- Heart disease
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Smoking

If you have risk factors for stroke, you can take steps to minimize the risks you can control by:

- Avoiding or limiting alcohol intake
- Exercising on a regular basis and staying active
- Following a healthy nutrition plan
- Keeping appointments for regular checkups with your doctor
- Seeing your doctor when needed to control conditions such as diabetes or heart disease
- Quitting smoking and/or drug use
- Taking your medications as prescribed



ACT **F.A.S.T.** TO SAVE LIVES

The best way to reduce your risk of long-term side effects from stroke is to learn the signs and symptoms and act F.A.S.T.

F.A.S.T. is an easy way to remember the sudden signs of stroke:

F	Face drooping. Does one side of the face droop or is it numb? Ask the person to smile.
A	Arm weakness. Is one arm weak or numb? Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?
S	Speech difficulty. Is speech slurred, are they unable to speak, or are they hard to understand? Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence, like "the sky is blue." Is the sentence repeated correctly?
T	Time to call 911. If the person shows any of these symptoms, even if the symptoms go away, call 911 and get them to the hospital immediately.

TREATMENTS FOR STROKE

Your best chance for recovery from stroke depends on fast and accurate treatment. If you are at risk or have had a previous stroke, your doctor may recommend aspirin or other medicines that act as blood thinners (anticoagulants). In some cases, taking statins, medicines that lower cholesterol, may help reduce your risk of stroke.

Patients with strokes resulting from blood clots, called ischemic strokes, can receive immediate life-saving treatment using a "clot-busting" drug called TPA. The faster you receive TPA following a stroke, the more likely you will recover from the stroke, especially if you are within three hours of your first stroke symptom.

Your best chance for recovery from stroke depends on fast and accurate treatment.

LEARN
MORE

Balance, HCR ManorCare's comprehensive health and wellness blog, supplies readers with healthy ideas throughout the year. The blog is designed to serve as a resource, not only for patients, residents and families, but for anyone who strives to live a healthy, "balanced" life. For more information and help in making healthy choices, go to balance.hcr-manorcare.com and sign up to receive our newsletters. If you need help making a health care decision, visit our care finder and live chat.